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FEMA

Recovery News

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ONE WEEK TO DISASTER ASSISTANCE DEADLINE

PASADENA, CA—Individuals who have financial costs as a result of the wildfires have one week remaining to register for federal and state assistance, according to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the Governor's Office of Emergency Services (OES).

"I want to be sure everyone with disaster-related losses knows that there is a deadline to register for federal assistance," said FEMA Federal Coordinating Officer Mike Hall. "You must get your name and other information into the FEMA system before 6 p.m. Wednesday, Jan. 9th, and the only way to do it is by registering with FEMA."

Individual assistance is available to affected homeowners and renters in Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, San Diego, Santa Barbara and Ventura counties for eligible losses and damages caused by the wildfires.

"OES is committed to working with FEMA, the U.S. Small Business Administration and state agencies to make sure that all Californians affected by the fires have the opportunity to apply for federal and state disaster assistance," said Henry Renteria, director of the Governor's Office of Emergency Services (OES) and state coordinating officer for the fire recovery effort. "It is critical, though, that homeowners, renters and business owners affected by the fires do their part by applying before the Jan. 9 deadline."

Telephone registrants may call **1-800-621-FEMA (3362)** or **TTY 1-800-462-7585** between 8 a.m. and 6 p.m. Monday through Saturday. The deadline for telephone registration is 6 p.m. Wednesday, Jan. 9. Or, individuals and business owners may register online at www.FEMA.gov until midnight Jan. 9.

The Jan. 9 deadline also applies to applications for low-interest disaster loans from the SBA. For residential property damage not covered by insurance, the SBA loan program is the primary form of disaster assistance.

In addition, completion of the SBA loan application is a pre-condition to qualify for grants from FEMA and the state of California. An exception to the SBA deadline is for economic injury disaster loans, which may be made until July 24, 2008. Call the SBA at **1-800-659-2955** or visit **www.sba.gov/services/disasterassistance**.

"I urge anyone who has received an SBA loan application to submit it before the deadline," Hall said.

Wednesday, Jan. 9, 2008, is also the deadline for Southern California residents to apply for federally-funded Disaster Unemployment Assistance (DUA). The program is funded by FEMA and claims are processed through the California Employment Development Department (EDD). All individuals—including self-employed—who are unemployed as a result of the October and November wildfires in the federally-declared California counties may be eligible for DUA.

FEMA coordinates the federal government's role in preparing for, preventing, mitigating the effects of, responding to, and recovering from all domestic disasters, whether natural or man-made, including acts of terror.

The California Governor's Office of Emergency Services (OES) coordinates overall state-agency response to major disasters in support of local government. OES is also responsible for maintaining the State Emergency Plan and coordinating California's preparedness, mitigation and recovery efforts.

Disaster recovery assistance is available without regard to race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, disability, English proficiency or economic status. If you or someone you know has been discriminated against, you should call FEMA toll-free at 1-800-621-FEMA (3362). For TTY call 1-800-462-7585.

SBA is the federal government's primary source of money for the long-term rebuilding of disaster-damaged private property. SBA helps homeowners, renters, businesses of all sizes, and private non-profit organizations fund repairs or rebuilding efforts, and cover the cost of replacing lost or disaster-damaged personal property. These disaster loans cover uninsured and uncompensated losses and do not duplicate benefits of other agencies or organizations. For information about SBA programs, applicants may call 800-659-2955.

Temporary housing assistance from FEMA does not require that an applicant file for an SBA loan. However, an applicant must complete an SBA loan application to be eligible for additional assistance under the part of the Other Needs Assistance (ONA) program that covers personal property, vehicle repair or replacement, and moving and storage expenses. There are other ONA grants such as public transportation expenses, medical and dental expenses, and funeral and burial expenses that do not require individuals to apply for an SBA loan to be eligible. FEMA will process applications for housing assistance regardless of whether the applicant has applied for an SBA loan, and eligibility determinations for applicants requesting FEMA's temporary housing assistance will not be held up because the applicant has or has not filled out an SBA application.

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